

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE BLOGGERS ROUNDTABLE WITH LIEUTENANT COLONEL
KARL SLAUGHENHAUPT, SENIOR MENTOR, 2ND BRIGADE, 205TH CORPS, FOB
APACHE, QALAT, AFGHANISTAN VIA TELECONFERENCE FROM AFGHANISTAN
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CHARLES "JACK" HOLT (chief, New Media Operations, OASD PA): Colonel,
Colonel Karl -- make sure I get this pronounced right -- Slaughenhaupt?

LT. COL. SLAUGHENHAUPT: Yes, sir, exactly.

MR. HOLT: All right, sir. Thank you very much. Now, you're the
senior mentor, 2nd Brigade of the 205th Afghan National Army Corps. You're part
of the embedded training team, is that correct, sir?

LT. COL. SLAUGHENHAUPT: That is correct.

MR. HOLT: All right, sir. I just wanted to get all that straight. On
the line with us this morning we've got Andrew Lubin with ON Point, and Richard
Lowry is with us this morning. And we've got some others, like I said, that
should be joining us, so we'll see if they join us. And gentlemen, when you ask
your questions, be sure and state your name and your publication so that we get
that all squared away too.

So, Colonel, do you have an opening statement for us?

LT. COL. SLAUGHENHAUPT: Yeah, I sure do. It shouldn't take more than
just a few minutes to read it. But basically I'm going to give you an overview
of kind of what I think about the brigade, talk a little bit about where I think
the insurgency is at, at least in this province, and then give you a little
vignette on an example of an operation that we conducted recently that's kind of
starting -- it's proving to be the most effective model, and I think it's going
to be the way we're going to go about trying to take the fight to the enemy here
a little bit more effectively in this province. So without any further ado,
I'll just go ahead and get started.

For nearly the last 10 months, I've been serving as the senior adviser
to the 2nd Infantry Brigade of the 205th ANA Corps. The brigade is
headquartered in Qalat, Zabul province. The bottom line, for me this has been
one of the most rewarding assignments of my entire military career.

The Afghans are fearless in battle and are by and large capably led by
a dedicated and aggressive office corps. The brigade is ethnically integrated,

so tribal relationships are not a factor and ethnic influences really are minimal to non-existent, for the most part.

The ANA have a great reputation and are sought out by all coalition forces in this province and are really doing the majority of the heavy lifting in this province. The ANA consistently conduct independent operations, all the way from squad to brigade level, and that's without any U.S. oversight. In some cases at the lower levels, particularly platoon and squad levels, I have U.S. advisers down to the company level in all five of the brigade's battalions, and they're dispersed throughout the province in nine of the 11 districts.

The primary purpose of my advisers is to liaise with coalition units, coach, teach, mentor, provide advice and bring to bear the more technical coalition enablers, such as close air support, attack aviation, air medevac, humanitarian assistance and reconstruction projects.

My advisers conduct combat operations side by side with their Afghan army counterparts, but principally synchronize enablers in support of ANA operations.

My assessment of the threat in this province is that the insurgency suffered a total defeat this summer through the combined efforts of the ANA and coalition forces. Anti-government elements initially began their spring offensive by conducting fairly spectacular platoon-sized complex attacks and ambushes along Highway 1, targeting Afghan and coalition security forces. However, these attacks resulted in significant enemy losses.

The enemy on more than one occasion -- correction -- the ANA on more than one occasion demonstrated incredible tenacity by rallying back after being ambushed and inflicting -- inflicted heavy losses on the enemy by fire and maneuver. Bottom line: that when the ANA gets into a fight, they win.

As a result, the enemy shifted their practices and began using IEDs on secondary roads and conducting much smaller-scale ambushes on the highway against civilian targets, rather than military or security forces, as well as they began conducting ineffective indirect-fire attacks on our forwarding operating bases.

The 2nd Brigade, accompanied by U.S. advisers, recently conducted a province-wide combat operation from 22 to 28 October, the propose of which was to kill or capture anti-government elements and disrupt insurgent lines of communication and their movement throughout the province. This was the second operation of this type wherein we conducted mutually supporting but decentralized operations at the company level in an effort to influence as many districts as possible simultaneously and thereby deny insurgents their traditional lines of communication.

This operation was conducted at the direction of the Afghan army, based primarily on their human intelligence sources. The Afghan army conducted deliberate planning at the brigade and battalion level to develop their own scheme of maneuver, with some advice and assistance from the -- their American advisers. The task organization included Afghan army units, as the main effort, supported by U.S. and Romanian International Security Assistance Forces, U.S. and coalition Special Operations Forces, Afghan National Police, and Provincial Reconstruction Team medical and civil affairs personnel. Bottom line is, this was a great effort by all coalition and Afghan security forces in the provinces.

The main effort of this operation was a series of search and attack operations in Deh Chopan district, which is a remote district in northern Zabul province, where Afghan and foreign insurgents were reported to be gathering in an attempt to stage a decisive attack over in Forward Operating Base Baylough, an outpost manned by both U.S. and Afghan army units.

We made contact on the second day of the operation near Davood Zai (sp) village and remained in contact with an enemy force estimated at 75 to 100, comprised of Afghan, Uzbek, Pakistani and Arab fighters. The enemy was equipped with AK-47s, 2-KM machine guns, RPGs, 82- millimeter mortars and SPG-9 recoilless rifles.

Over the course of two days, the 1st Battalion of the 2nd ANA Brigade pursued the insurgents, clearing the area and isolating a force of 28 insurgents by envelopment, forcing the insurgents to withdraw through a rocky outcropping and preventing them from maneuvering or withdrawing by using mortar and rifle fire.

Once isolated, we used a UAV to verify our target and killed them by conducting an air strike with two USF-15s. This is a decisive victory in what has been traditionally considered an insurgent safe haven. We confirmed the death of 21 insurgents, but intelligence sources indicate enemy losses at 40 to 50 KIA and 17 more wounded. ANA only suffered 16 wounded; all but one of those wounds was very minor.

This operation was a complete success on a variety of levels. The ANA Brigade integrated engineer and artillery units from the brigades combat support battalion, providing a very competent counter- IED and route clearance capability finding seven IEDs before they detonated as well as integrating organic indirect fire to support ground forces while in close combat. The ANA demonstrated graduate- level tactical ability and command and control by using two rifle companies to maneuver separate from their battalion headquarters to isolate an enemy force while in contact. Furthermore the brigade commander demonstrated exceptional skill as an IO delivery system conducting various active key leader engagements with local elders.

Lastly, the brigade demonstrated his understanding of consequence management providing needed medical assistance to local villagers. This is a great example of full spectrum counterinsurgent operations combining kinetic and non-kinetic operations to simultaneously defeat the insurgents while reaching out to the Afghan people, and that's the end of my statement.

MR. HOLT: All right, sir. Thank you very much.

Andrew, why don't you get us started.

Q Great. Thanks. Colonel, Andrew Lubin from U.S. Cavalry ON Point. Sir, I spent about a month in Afghanistan in April, and I was really impressed with the young -- with young ANAs. They're as good as our kids out of boot camp, out of Camp Lejeune or out of -- out of wherever, and their officers weren't bad. How are their NCOs? How do you find the --

LT. COL. SLAUGHENHAUPT: Yeah, that's a great question, and that is one of the things I would characterize as the most significant shortcomings we have right now, and the reasons for it are really two- fold. One is that they're -- based on time, distance and seat availability at some of their NCO courses in Kabul, it's been hard to get enough NCOs through the training. So what we've

done now is we've actually established Afghan-led mobile training teams that will go out to the various corps and will start a team leader and squad leader course of which we'll be sending our -- some of our ANA soldiers to within the coming weeks. They're going to go down to Kandahar, go through the course for about two weeks, and then come back.

The second problem with the NCO corps right now is that a lot of the officers that you have are from the old DPRA, Democratic People's Republic of Afghanistan, army, so it's sort of a Russian model, and so there's some institutional resistance, as there are in most armies of the world, to allowing NCOs have the appropriate amount of authority. And my sergeant major mentor has been working real hard with the ANA Brigades, sergeant major, to reinforce the NCO support channel by doing things like soldier of the month boards, promotion boards and basic things like that to try to reinforce the NCOs. He also does a quarterly NCO seminar, where the sergeant major brings in all of the sergeant majors and first sergeants, and they teach a series of classes, some of which are U.S.-led and some of which are ANA-led.

But we're slowly making progress in that department, but it is one of their biggest shortcomings, to be honest with you, right now.

Q But isn't that kind of cultural? I mean, Afghanistan very much like Iraq has a top-down, you know, do-what-you're-told society. You know, initiative has kind of been bred out of them about 2,000 years ago. Is this something you think you can do or just -- maybe they just need better lieutenants instead of better staff sergeants.

LT. COL. SLAUGHENHAUPT: Well, you know, the brigade commander, whose name is Brigadier General Abdul Rafik (ph), he's an old mujaheddin guy.

And he fought against the Russians, he fought against the Taliban with the Northern Alliance, and he and I have talked about this quite a bit. And he really gets it, you know? He thinks about things a lot like we do. And he's dedicated to adopting the same model that we use. You know, he believes we're a success story. He sees how active my NCOs are and how much authority they have. And he's a believer, but that's a cultural thing that they've got to work over time. He's determined to do it, and I think that it will take some time.

You know, I was an adviser to the Saudi army, as well, and they have the same kind of attitude, that NCOs just weren't that important, and most of them spent most of their time pouring tea, which is kind of a similar situation here. But the leadership, the brigade commander, specifically, believes that it's something to work towards, and so we're making some progress in that department.

Great, thank you. Okay, Rich, your turn.

MR. HOLT: Richard?

Q Hello. This is Richard Lowry. I'm an independent author.

Q Oh, THE Rich Lowry. Hey, how you doing?

Q Fine. How are you, Andrew?

Q Good, thanks. Didn't recognize you. Okay.

Q We've heard recently about a large battle north of Kandahar where a large group of Taliban have been surrounded. Do you have any new information on that?

LT. COL. SLAUGHENHAUPT: I do not. I probably know about as much as you do about it, in that there were some Taliban surrounded. But the only thing I know about is what I've read on open sources. But I don't really have anything to offer you in that department.

Q Okay, then let me ask this. Mar e gar, are you familiar with that town? Is that in your area?

LT. COL. SLAUGHENHAUPT: I'm sorry, I --

Q Mar-e-gar (sp). LT. COL. SLAUGHENHAUPT: No. No, that's not in Zabul province.

Q It's up in the mountains, just north of you. So are your Afghan soldiers and American troops moving up into the mountains regularly and getting up in there unopposed, or are they still being ambushed when they travel up deep into the mountains?

LT. COL. SLAUGHENHAUPT: It depends on where you're talking out. We have some bases, forward operating bases, in Mizan district, Argahandab district and Deh Chopan district, which are the most mountainous areas of Zabul province. And there are some areas within those districts that are clearly enemy safe havens, and this Davood Zai Village was a perfect example of that.

But, you know, we can go in there and we can clear those places out. There's no question about it. Right now in this particular brigade, however, we -- our 2nd Infantry "kandak" was recently pulled to Kabul to do some commando training. They're going to become the core commando battalion. And so that has reduced our combat power at least for a -- probably until December. We're supposed to get another kandak back. And at that time we're going to train them, go through a training program with them, and then in the springtime we're planning on going into a couple of save havens -- enemy safe havens and clear those out.

I mean, you can get ambushed just about anywhere in the mountains, to answer your question fairly directly. However, you know, whenever we have been ambushed -- in fact, on the way to this operation in Deh Chopan, we were ambushed; hit an IED and were ambushed by the insurgent force of probably about 10. Well, the ANA dismounted, (cleared ?) the village, captured a couple of insurgents and also essentially quickly routed them and forced their withdrawal without taking any casualties at all. So, I mean, when they get in contact, these guys react and they fight.

And so, typically, the TTP has been for the enemy to use essentially hit-and-run, harassing, fairly ineffective ambushes, but they don't stay and fight and they don't -- they really don't, you know, I guess -- they don't shoot up too many or they don't wound or they don't kill too many Afghans. I mean, it's really a rarity that an Afghan gets killed in an ambush around here.

Q Well, that's good news.

LT. COL. SLAUGHENHAUPT: Yeah.

MR. HOLT: It is.

Okay. Any follow-up questions?

Q Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah.

MR. HOLT: Okay.

Q (Ask him?). We got half an hour, right?

MR. HOLT: (Chuckling.) Yeah.

Q Give me a break!

Sir, Andrew Lubin again. How are your -- how are the Americans set up? When I spent my month over there, I was up and around -- between Asadabad and Towr Kham, and they had, you know, the big bases, and then you had probably little OPs of, you know, five, six, seven Marines, you know, here and there. Are you doing the same in your area?

LT. COL. SLAUGHENHAUPT: Yes, we're doing exactly the same thing here. You know, the principal ISAF and military adviser bases are right around Kelat. And then we have ANA and/or ISAF in almost every district except for two: Tahki Afghan (sp) into the north and then Tarnak Wa Jaldak in the south, which is right along the highway.

But they have the companies in every one of these districts, roughly a company-size element. And in most cases, they're partnered up with a U.S. ISAF or a U.S. Special Operations unit of some kind -- so pretty much the same footprint, same model, where the -- the most effective security force out in those districts is the Afghan National Army. So yeah, pretty much the same footprint that you're talking about.

Q Do you have people down on the border, too? I spent some time with the BPs up there, kind of walking into Pakistan a couple of times.

LT. COL. SLAUGHENHAUPT: Yeah, we do not. The -- right now, the -- you know, my chain of command has two levels up, has also got responsibility for the police. And so that's a little bit out of my lane, though I do help out with that in some respects. But right now, there's border police in Kandahar around -- you know, they're posted out of Spin Buldak. And there are some border police stations or checkpoints along the border with Zabul province. But we have very little interaction with them because they're so darn far away from our nearest FOB. It's about 30 kilometers away from the nearest Afghan FOB or ANA FOB.

Q Okay. Well, do we have anybody -- does Task -- are you part of ISAF or are you part of Task Force Phoenix?

LT. COL. SLAUGHENHAUPT: I'm part of Task Force Phoenix.

Q Okay, yeah, because I -- that's who I was with. And we basically -- they had people down there. We spent a couple of days kind of wandering around, like just on the border, on the other side. They had all these little -- you have three-man BP outposts there, you know, 10,000 to 1,200 feet.

LT. COL. SLAUGHENHAUPT: Right.

I'm sorry, I didn't get your -- was in there a question in there?

Q Yeah. I was just surprised that there was not that much interaction, because that seemed to be -- at least in the east, that's what was made -- (inaudible) -- you know, the ANA was doing such a good job; they were really trying to spin up the --

LT. COL. SLAUGHENHAUPT: Yeah.

Q -- Task Force Phoenix out there, working with the BPs and the -- (inaudible).

LT. COL. SLAUGHENHAUPT: Right. Right. That is a Task Force Phoenix function. And I know that in the coming months, we're supposed to get more border police teams and Afghan National Police teams fielded. And that is gradually becoming the main effort here if it -- and it may already be, because once again, that's not really my lane. But I do have some understanding of what's going on, and I know that there's a plan to start providing mentors and advisers on the police.

We currently have two police mentor teams in this province, and they've been on the ground for, I guess, about three or four months now. And you're already seeing a tremendous difference in the effectiveness of the police. So these guys are doing a great job. And what's best about the police mentors is that I now have somebody I can call and I can talk to and I can say, "Hey, you know, what's going on with the police? Are the police going to do this thing that they said they were going to do?" And they also have somebody who can help them out with some of their logistical problems, maintenance problems, and help facilitate more effective command and control of the police. So the bottom line is, they're really making a heck of a difference, and they're already coming a long way. We can see a lot of progress in the police, particularly along Highway 1, between Kelat and Shahjoi, Shahjoi being the second-largest town in the province.

Q Okay. Where is Shahjoi in comparison to Kelat? I got a map up here in front of me, and I don't see it on this map.

LT. COL. SLAUGHENHAUPT: It's about 60 kilometers to the northeast of Kelat.

Q Okay.

LT. COL. SLAUGHENHAUPT: Maybe 20 kilometers or so south of the Ghazni border.

Q Okay. Fair enough. I've got it. I've got it roughly now.

Do you have any interaction with the local governor, with the -- and with the local politicians?

LT. COL. SLAUGHENHAUPT: Quite a bit. I mean, I -- the governor holds a weekly security meeting, wherein, you know, the police, the national director of security -- they're sort of like the Afghan version of the FBI/CIA -- the Afghan National Army's there. I'm there. The ISAF -- Romanian ISAF and U.S. ISAF guys have a representative there. There's a State Department representative there. And usually it's a -- it's fairly decent forum for the

governor to talk to us about kind of what he's hearing about some of the problems he has and what he thinks that we ought to focus some of our efforts -- but it's a pretty decent forum, and I do interact with him fairly regularly.

MR. HOLT: Okay. Appreciate it.

Rich?

Q Yeah. You know, as with the war in Iraq and any real counterinsurgent war, it's winning the hearts and the minds of the people. How is the normal civilian population's attitude toward the Iraqi (sic; Afghan) National Army and the police and your presence nowadays?

LT. COL. SLAUGHENHAUPT: Yeah. That's a good question. The Afghan National Army is highly respected as a legitimate arm of the central government, no question about it. They -- there is -- there's very little corruption. There is no -- I know of no case where an Afghan soldier has ever tried to shake down a local villager. In fact, the Afghan soldiers, from the brigade commander down to privates, seem to inherently understand the need to interact in a positive way with the locals.

I mean, for example, we go in to do a MEDCAP or humanitarian assistance, and the Afghan soldiers, they honestly -- they enjoy doing that kind of stuff.

And the brigade commander -- for example, we were doing a cordon and search recently, and he was there, and we found nothing. And we talked to the locals, and the brigade commander had determined that this was a fairly friendly town. There was not -- there were no insurgents in it. And he said -- and it was about 13:30. And he said, "You know, we should hang out here until about 4:00 or so." And I said, "Why?" And he goes, "Well, just so that the people can interact with my soldiers, and my soldiers can interact with them, and they can see what we're about, and they can have a better understanding, so we're not some -- you know, some group of people, of thugs, which is usually how the insurgents would characterize us and say that, hey, we're -- when we come into this town, we're going to do bad things. Well, we're coming into this town, and we're distributing humanitarian assistance items. My medics are treating the locals. And they're just interacting with them on a very friendly basis."

And so -- and he understands the importance of winning hearts and minds, and the soldiers seem to get it and just do it naturally. There's never even been a case where -- during a search where an Afghan soldier has stolen anything from a house that I've ever encountered. And I've been on quite a few cordon and searches.

So they're honest. Their leadership is good. And in fact, if an ANA soldier did do something like that, he would incur the wrath of his leadership. There's no doubt about it. So I think they get it there; it's -- inherently.

Q So are the people responding to that? Are they beginning to trust and -- (inaudible) -- the military?

LT. COL. SLAUGHENHAUPT: Oh, yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Absolutely.

Another good example is, you know, we've been doing a lot of CERP projects. The ETTs have been the -- really doing the majority of the work in

the Commanders Emergency Response Program and reconstruction projects and things like that.

We focus mostly on the small stuff, while the PRT focuses on the big stuff -- you know, roads and bridges and things like that, and we do water wells and karezes and smaller projects.

And as a result of that kind of interaction, we have seen an increase of walk-in human and human intelligence sharing because of the positive interaction that the Afghans and my advisors are having on the locals. You know, they're coming and sharing information with us, and in a number of cases that has resulted in actionable intelligence, where we've gone out and been able to either ambush or interdict insurgent forces moving along their lines of communication. So there's no question about it that it's yielding some results.

We've also established a hotline, and I keep it in my (talk ?) and my terp answers the phone. We've gotten tips over the hotline, and we reward people for -- if you capture material or people, we can pay them for that. And so we've seen an increase in that, and those are two initiatives that have really come to fruition during my tenure.

Q Well, that's great news.

LT. COL. SLAUGHENHAUPT: Yeah, it really is good news. So if you -- you know, there's a lot of province, though, and it's very compartmentalized here by the weather. There's three rivers, and they kind of cut the darn province off into three chunks during the coldest winter months. And the bottom line is it's probably about -- I would say about 25 percent of the province is just darn hard to get to. And so as a result of that, we move across the province there's no surprise, and most of our movement is by ground. And as a result of the lack of infrastructure in this province, it just takes -- for example, we moved about 50 kilometers up to Deh Chopan, and it took us about 14 hours to move 50 kilometers -- give you some idea of the quality of the roads around here.

Q You're not surprising anybody when you move out. What about the quality of Highway 1? Is it open all the way up? Does it --

LT. COL. SLAUGHENHAUPT: Yeah, absolutely. Yeah, it's -- I mean, the enemy clearly sees an opportunity now. As I mentioned in my statement, the -- they've met with no success. They tried to attack Americans and Afghans and the police, and they really, really suffered for it. And as a result, they shifted away from that, and now what they'll do is they will attack commercial traffic for the most part -- fuel trucks, jinga trucks, things like that.

But of late what we've found during the course of these two operations, the one in September and the one that we recently did this month, there was not one single attack on the highway while we were out conducting these operations because I believe that -- because it significantly disrupted their movement. So we had police on the highway; we had Afghan National Army, ISAF, Special Operations Forces conducting joint operations at the company level in just about every district, which really forced them -- it denied them their mobility corridors that they traditionally use. And so it really, really put a stop to their movement and any of their attacks on the highway.

I think it was very successful, and this is the model that we have all arrived at here. And we have decided that this is the way we're going to do this. We're going to try to do this about once a month or so.

Q Well, one last question, Andrew, and then I'll let you talk again. As winter is approaching, how will the enemy's tactics change? Does it pretty much get snowed in there?

LT. COL. SLAUGHENHAUPT: Yeah, it really does. The -- you know, I arrived here in January, and I'll tell you what, it was just quiet as could be until around April, you know, when it started to warm up. And we've had a lot of rain this year, a fair amount of snow and quite a bit of rain, which really -- other than the improved roads that we use for our (MFRs/MSRs ?) here, that's really the only way to get around.

And the insurgents don't use those. They stay off those roads and they travel primarily by motorcycle in the riverbeds. So the weather definitely will cause the insurgency to go to ground. There's no question about it in my mind. And we've already started to see that based on our pattern analysis of enemy activity, you know, it follows a fairly routine spike in the warmer months and then really, really drops off sharply in the winter months.

But our goal is to continue to conduct aggressive operations similar to what we've been doing so long as the weather allows us move around fairly freely as well, because it also has a limiting effect on our ability to move around in our humvees because the mud here is just horrendous in the wintertime.

Q So the rain's worse than the snow?

LT. COL. SLAUGHENHAUPT: I beg your pardon?

Q The rain is worse than the snow.

LT. COL. SLAUGHENHAUPT: Yeah, pretty much. I mean, here where we're -- in Qalat, we're at about 5,300 feet above sea level, and, you know, some of the higher elevations in the province, in the northern parts of the province are about in your 9,000 feet or so. But even down here, I mean, we don't get a -- we didn't get a lot of snow in January and February, but we did get quite a bit of rain. You know, the temperatures were in the upper 30s and low 40s for the most part. But it was a -- it definitely slowed things down around here, there's no doubt about it.

Q Okay.

MR. HOLT: All right. Andrew, anything else?

Q Yeah, a quickie one. Colonel, how long will you be there for? And what's your stance on embedded media?

LT. COL. SLAUGHENHAUPT: I'm here until January. And the question was, how do I feel about embedded media?

Q Yeah. Those of us who still have an ISAF pass that's good through February, I -- Bucks County is getting really restricting the past couple months. LT. COL. SLAUGHENHAUPT: Really? I did not know that. I know that my boss, Colonel McGrath, (does that ?). And I'm not sure -- there was a reporter here, and I don't remember where she was from. She didn't come to my

FOB. But he wanted to embed her. So I'm not -- you know, I would have -- I would welcome it, personally. I don't know what the thinking is on the part of the chain of command right now, but to my knowledge, it would be welcome. I would love to have a reporter come here and hang out with us, because I think we have -- we have a lot of good-news stories to tell about what's going on around here, quite honestly.

Q Sounds good. Jack, we have the colonel's PAO details? We can -- I can do this maybe Decemberish?

MR. HOLT: Yeah, I -- yeah. If you can get yourself over there, yeah, we can probably -- we can hook you up.

Q Sounds good to me. Colonel, I may take you up on that. I've got some logistics to work on, but I may -- I will do my best to take you up on that.

LT. COL. SLAUGHENHAUPT: Okay, yeah, great. We'd be glad to have you.

MR. HOLT: All right. Thanks much.

Lieutenant Colonel Carl Slaughenhaupt. He's the senior mentor of the 2nd Brigade of 205th Corps, the Afghan National Army from Qalat, Afghanistan. Thank you for being with us this morning, or this afternoon your time. We really appreciate it.

LT. COL. SLAUGHENHAUPT: You betcha.

MR. HOLT: Great information. Thank you, sir.

Q Colonel, thanks for the time.

LT. COL. SLAUGHENHAUPT: Sure. You guys take care of yourselves.

MR. HOLT: All right, you too, sir.

Q Good luck, sir. Thank you. Out here.

Q Colonel, bye-bye now.

LT. COL. SLAUGHENHAUPT (?): Bye, all.

END.